

ALASKA MEDICAL ASSISTANCE WILL ACCEPT HIPAA NON-COMPLIANT ELECTRONIC CLAIMS AFTER OCTOBER 16, 2003 COMPLIANCE DEADLINE

The Division of Health Care Services (DHCS) has decided to implement a contingency plan to accept non-compliant electronic transactions, including claims, for the Alaska Medical Assistance programs after the October 16, 2003 HIPAA compliance deadline.

To ensure continued claim processing, Alaska Medical Assistance will accept existing electronic claim formats as well as HIPAA compliant transactions.

* For more information, see detailed announcement on back page or refer to website at <http://alaska.fhsc.com> - choose "HIPAA"

ALASKA MEDICAL ASSISTANCE WILL ACCEPT HIPAA NON-COMPLIANT ELECTRONIC CLAIMS AFTER OCTOBER 16, 2003 COMPLIANCE DEADLINE

The Division of Health Care Services (DHCS) has decided to implement a contingency plan to accept non-compliant electronic transactions, including claims, for the Alaska Medical Assistance programs after the October 16, 2003 HIPAA compliance deadline.

Implementing this contingency moves us toward the dual goals of achieving HIPAA compliance without disrupting providers' cash flow and operations, so that recipients can continue to receive the services they need.

The decision was made because of the increased likelihood that many healthcare providers and trading partners will be unable to meet the October 16th HIPAA transactions and code sets regulation deadline.

The DHCS decision is supported by guidance received from the Department of Health & Human Services, dated 07/24/03* which informed payers that they will not be penalized for accepting existing transactions during a transition period immediately following the 10-16-03 compliance date as part of their contingency planning provided that they can demonstrate good faith efforts in working with providers and trading partners to facilitate compliance.

To ensure continued claim processing, Alaska Medical Assistance will accept existing electronic claim formats as well as HIPAA compliant transactions. Providers and trading partners who continue to submit non-compliant transactions may need to develop a corrective action plan that demonstrates and documents good faith efforts to comply with the HIPAA standards. These plans may be requested by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). While each covered entity is responsible for their own compliance efforts with the federal HIPAA electronic transaction and code set provisions, the DHCS fiscal agent contractor, First Health Services Corporation, will continue to facilitate the transition of healthcare providers toward compliance through the availability of:

- Web cast recordings of past HIPAA Knowledge Transfer Sessions on a variety of topics*
- An Alaska Trading Partner Companion Guide* to include instructions specific to Alaska Medical Assistance for all HIPAA transactions
- The HIPAA Provider Support Team (907-561-5650 or toll free in Alaska 1-800-770-5650; choose Option 91)
- The Electronic Commerce Customer Support (ECCS) Team (toll free nationwide 888-829-5373; choose Option 2)
- Transaction Testing and Support

All providers and trading partners who plan to submit HIPAA compliant transactions are required to complete Information Submission Agreements* and begin testing their transactions as soon as possible. If you have any questions, are ready to test transactions, or are interested in becoming a Beta Tester (by sending duplicate submissions in both non-compliant and compliant formats for parallel testing), please contact the HIPAA Provider Support Team.

* Available on the website at <http://alaska.fhsc.com> - choose "HIPAA"